

Tutorial:

How to Install, Configure, and Use the EKEOrders Strategy in NinjaTrader 8.1.4.2

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Introduction

The EKEOrders strategy is a custom NinjaTrader 8 strategy developed by Jan Roger Ekedal. It allows traders to place ATM (Automated Trading Machine) strategy orders interactively on a chart using a visual preview line and a button panel with "Buy," "Sell," and "Close" options. The strategy is provided as a pre-compiled .dll file within a .zip archive and is intended for simulation purposes.

Key Features:

- Interactive order placement by clicking on the chart after selecting Buy or Sell.
- Visual preview line showing the intended order price.
- Button panel for initiating Buy, Sell, or closing all positions/orders.
- Customizable UI settings (e.g., button colors, layout, font size).
- Integration with NinjaTrader's ATM strategies for advanced order management.

Disclaimer: *This strategy is for simulation purposes only. The author is not responsible for any financial losses. Use at your own risk. Copying, selling, or redistributing this software is strictly prohibited without explicit permission from the author, Jan Roger Ekedal.*

Prerequisites:

- NinjaTrader 8.1.4.1 installed.
 - An ATM strategy template saved in NinjaTrader (e.g., with stop-loss and profit-target settings).
 - A simulation account (e.g., Sim101) or a live trading account configured in NinjaTrader.
 - Basic familiarity with NinjaTrader's interface.
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Step 1: Installing the EKEOrders Strategy

1. Obtain the Zip File:

- Download the .zip file containing the pre-compiled EKEOrders.dll (e.g., EKEOrders.zip). Ensure it's from a trusted source, such as the author's official distribution.

2. Open NinjaTrader:

- Launch NinjaTrader 8.1.4.1 on your computer.

3. Import the Strategy:

- From the NinjaTrader Control Center, go to Tools > Import > NinjaScript Add-On.
- In the file explorer window that appears, navigate to the location of the downloaded EKEOrders.zip file.
- Select the .zip file and click Open.

4. Confirm Import:

- NinjaTrader will extract and install the .dll from the .zip file. A dialog box may appear showing the import details (e.g., "EKEOrders Strategy").
- Click OK to proceed. If prompted about overwriting existing files, choose No unless you intend to update an older version.
- The Output window (Control Center > New > Output) will display a message like "Successfully imported NinjaScript Add-On" if the import succeeds.

Note: Since the strategy is a .dll, you don't need to compile it manually. If the import fails (e.g., due to a version mismatch or corrupted file), re-download the .zip and try again, or contact the author at jan.roger.ekedal@hotmail.com for assistance.

Step 2: Configuring the EKEOrders Strategy

🔗 Open Strategies from Chart:

- Open a chart for your chosen instrument in NinjaTrader.
- Right-click anywhere on the chart and select Strategies from the context menu.

🔗 Add the Strategy:

- In the Strategies window that appears, click Add.
- Select EKEOrders from the list of available strategies.
- Click OK to add it to the chart. This will enable the strategy with default settings, and the button panel should appear on the chart.

🔗 Access the Strategies Tab:

- In the NinjaTrader main window (Control Center), locate and select the Strategies tab. This tab lists all active strategies running on charts or in the platform.

🔗 Open Strategy Settings:

- Find the EKEOrders strategy in the list (it will be associated with your chart).
- Right-click on EKEOrders and select Settings from the context menu. This opens the strategy configuration window.

ATM Settings

- **ATM Strategy:** Select an existing ATM strategy from the dropdown (e.g., MyATMStrategy). This must be a pre-configured ATM template in NinjaTrader (stored in Documents\NinjaTrader 8\templates\AtmStrategy). It defines stop-loss, profit-target, and other order settings.

Visual Settings

- **Line length in %:** Sets the preview line's width as a percentage of the chart (default: 25%, range: 10-100).
- **Font Size:** Size of the price label on the preview line (default: 18, range: 10-30).
- **Font Color:** Color of the price label text.

Button Settings

- **Buy Button Color:** Color of the Buy button.
- **Sell Button Color:** Color of the Sell button.
- **Close Button Color:** Color of the Close button.
- **Vertical layout:** If checked (default: true), buttons stack vertically; if unchecked, they align horizontally.

- Button Panel Vertical Position: Position of the button panel (options: Top, Middle, Bottom; default: Middle).
- Pixel buffer from right: Distance of the button panel from the right edge (default: 52, range: 0-500).
- Pixel buffer from bottom: Distance from the bottom edge (default: 40, range: 0-500).
- Button panel Color: Background color of the button panel

2. Apply Settings:

- Click OK to save the configuration, but don't enable it yet.
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Step 3: Using the EKEOrders Strategy

1. Run on a Chart:

- After adding EKEOrders to your chart (from Step 2), verify it's enabled. In the NinjaTrader main window (Control Center), go to the Strategies tab and confirm EKEOrders is listed with a status of "Enabled" for your chart.
- You should see the button panel (Buy, Sell, Close) on the right side of the chart.

2. Place an Order:

- **Activate Buy/Sell Mode:**
 - Click the Buy button (green) to place a buy order or the Sell button (red) for a sell order.
- **Preview the Order:**
 - Move your mouse over the chart. A colored line (green for Buy, red for Sell) appears at the price level under your cursor, with a label showing the exact price (e.g., "1234.50").
- **Submit the Order:**
 - Left-click the chart at your desired price. The strategy submits an order using the selected ATM strategy:
 - **Buy:** If above the current ask, it's a Stop-Limit order; if below, it's a Limit order.
 - **Sell:** If above the current bid, it's a Limit order; if below, it's a Stop-Limit order.

3. Close All Positions and Orders:

- Click the Close button (gray) to cancel all open orders and close all positions for the chart's instrument.

4. Monitor Activity:

- Check the Control Center > Orders tab for submitted orders.
- Use the Positions tab to track open positions.
- Review the Output window for detailed logs (e.g., order submissions, errors).

5. Stop the Strategy:

- Select Strategies, and click Disable for EKEOrders. The button panel will disappear, and the strategy will terminate.
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Step 4: Displaying Trades on the Chart

The EKEOrders strategy includes a feature to visualize your trade history directly on the chart, showing entry and exit points with lines, triangles, and optional tick labels. To use this feature, you must enable the "Show Trades" button in the strategy settings and activate it during trading.

Enable the "Show Trades" Button

1. Access Strategy Settings:

- In the NinjaTrader Control Center, go to the Strategies tab.
- Find the EKEOrders strategy running on your chart, right-click it, and select Settings.

2. Activate the Show Trades Button:

- In the settings window, locate the Button Settings group.
- Find the Show Trades Button parameter and set it to True (default is False).
- Customize the button's appearance if desired:
- Show Trades Button Color: Set the button color (default: DodgerBlue).
- Click OK to apply the changes. The "Show Trades" button will now appear in the button panel on your chart.

3. Restart the Strategy (if needed):

If the strategy was already running, disable and re-enable it from the Strategies tab to ensure the button panel updates.

Use the Show Trades Button

1. Locate the Button:

- On your chart, the button panel (Buy, Sell, Close) now includes a fourth button for "Show Trades" (typically a blue button with an icon).

2. Cycle Through Display Modes:

- Click the "Show Trades" button to toggle between three states:
- State 0 (Closed Eye Icon): Trades are hidden (default).
- State 1 (Open Eye Icon): Displays trade lines and triangles:
 - Entry points are marked with a blue triangle (customizable via Entry Triangle Color).
 - Exit points are marked with a gray triangle (customizable via Exit Triangle Color).
 - Lines connect entries to exits, colored blue for winning trades and magenta for losing trades (customizable via Winning Trade Color and Losing Trade Color).
- State 2 (Tick Icon): Adds tick profit/loss labels to the trade lines, showing the net ticks gained or lost for each trade.
- Each click cycles to the next state (0 → 1 → 2 → 0).

3. Monitor Trades:

- Trades are drawn based on execution data from your connected account (e.g., Sim101). Ensure the chart's instrument matches the traded instrument.

- Open positions show only an entry triangle until they are closed.
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Customize Trade Visuals (Optional)

- In the Settings window, under the Trade Visuals group, adjust:
 - Execution Line Type: Solid, Dash, Dot, etc. (default: Solid).
 - Execution Line Thickness: Line width (default: 3, range: 1-10).
 - Triangle Size: Size of entry/exit triangles (default: 14, range: 5-100).
 - Trade Label Font Size: Size of tick labels (default: 16, range: 8-36).
 - Colors for winning/losing trades, triangles, and label backgrounds.
- Click OK to save changes.

Tips

- Zoom in/out or scroll the chart to ensure trades are visible within the current view.
- If trades don't appear, verify the strategy is connected to an account with trade history (see Troubleshooting).
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Step 5: Understanding File Saving and Loading

The EKEOrders strategy automatically saves trade execution data to a file, allowing you to retain trade history between sessions and visualize past trades on the chart. This section explains how files are named, saved, and loaded.

How File Saving Works

- Automatic Saving:
 - Trade data is saved whenever the strategy terminates (e.g., when disabled or NinjaTrader closes).
 - Data includes completed trades and open positions for the chart's instrument.
- File Format:
 - Saved as an XML file using NinjaTrader's serialization.
 - Contains details like entry/exit prices, quantities, times, and account name.
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- Naming Convention:
 - Files are named EKEOrders_Executions_[Instrument].xml, where [Instrument] is the full name of the chart's instrument (e.g., EKEOrders_Executions_ES 06-25.xml for E-mini S&P 500 June 2025).
 - Stored in the NinjaTrader user data directory: Documents\NinjaTrader 8\.
- Account Association:
 - Each trade is tagged with the account name (e.g., Sim101) used when the trade was executed.

How File Loading Works

- Automatic Loading:
 - When the strategy starts in real-time mode (State.Realtime), it checks for an existing file matching the chart's instrument and current account.
 - Loads trades into memory for visualization (if "Show Trades" is enabled).
- Load Limits:
 - Controlled by the Max Trades to Load parameter in Settings under the Parameters group (default: 500).
 - Set to 0 to load all trades, or specify a number to limit the count (e.g., 100 for the most recent 100 trades).
- Account Matching:
 - Only trades from the current account are loaded. Trades from other accounts (e.g., a live account vs. Sim101) are ignored.

Managing Saved Files

- Location:
 - Navigate to Documents\NinjaTrader 8\ to find saved files.
- Manual Deletion:
 - To clear trade history, delete the relevant .xml file. The next time the strategy runs, it starts with a clean slate.
- Backup:
 - Copy the .xml file to another location if you want to preserve trade history before deleting or switching accounts.

Tips

- Instrument Specificity: Each instrument has its own file. Switching the chart to a different instrument (e.g., from ES to NQ) loads a different file.
- Account Consistency: Ensure the strategy's account matches the Chart Trader account to avoid discrepancies in loaded trades (see Tips in Step 3).

Troubleshooting Loading Issues:

- If trades don't load, check the file exists and matches the instrument/account.
- Verify Max Trades to Load isn't set too low.

Strategy Logic Overview

- **Order Placement:**
 - Clicking "Buy" or "Sell" activates a mode where you can preview and place an order by clicking on the chart.
 - The order type (Limit or Stop-Limit) depends on the clicked price relative to the current market (bid/ask).
 - Orders use the selected ATM strategy for stop-loss and profit-target rules.
 - **Close Functionality:** Cancels all orders and closes all positions for the instrument using market orders.
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Troubleshooting

- **Import Fails:** Ensure the .zip file isn't corrupted and matches NinjaTrader 8.1.4.1's version. Re-download if needed.
 - **No Button Panel Appears:** Verify the strategy is enabled in real-time mode and the chart is active.
 - **Orders Not Submitting:** Confirm an ATM strategy is selected and the account is connected (check Output for " Assigned account").
 - **Preview Line Missing:** Ensure LineWidthPercentage is not 0 and refresh the chart (e.g., zoom in/out).
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Tips

Match Your Account Settings: Ensure the account selected in the EKEOrders strategy matches the one in your Chart Trader panel.

To check:

Open the Chart Trader panel on your chart (right-click > Chart Trader or press F7).

Note the account displayed in the Chart Trader dropdown (e.g., Sim101).

In the Control Center's Strategies tab, right-click EKEOrders, select Settings, and verify the Account parameter matches (e.g., set it to Sim101 if that's your Chart Trader account).

Mismatched accounts can prevent orders appearing in the expected account's order/position tabs.

Conclusion

You've successfully installed, configured, and used the EKEOrders strategy! Test it thoroughly in simulation mode. For support, contact Jan Roger Ekedal at jan.roger.ekedal@hotmail.com.

Make a donation at ekedal.no to support further development.

